

REMARKS

The application has been amended and is believed to be in condition for allowance.

There are no formal matters pending.

Amendments to the Disclosure

Independent claims 1 and 16 are amended to more clearly recite the distinguishing features of the invention. New claims 17-26, claim 17 being independent, further claim the invention. Support for these amendments and new claims are found at least in Figures 1-5 and page 4 of the specification, as further provided below.

No new matter is believed to be added by way of these amendments and new claims.

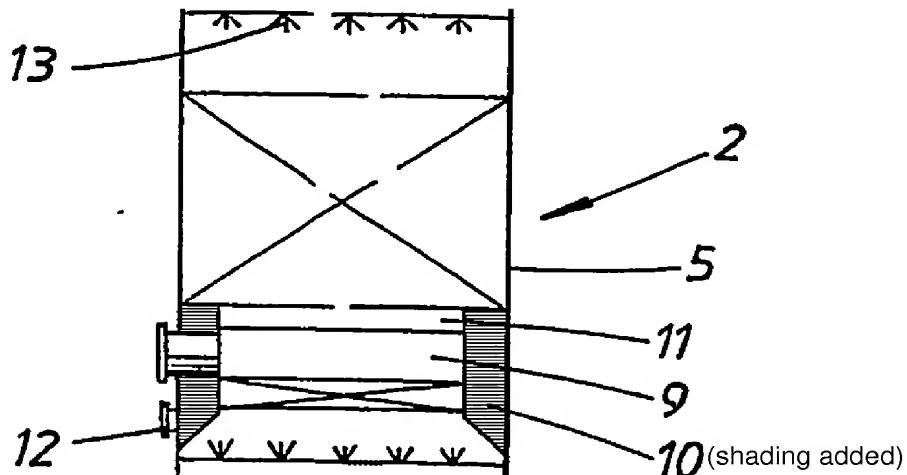
Substantive Issues - Section 103

The Official Action rejected claims 1-2, 10, 16 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Warner et al. (US 3,528,220; "WARNER") in view of Nolan (US 6,399,030; "NOLAN").

In response, it is firstly noted that the claims have been amended. It is respectfully submitted that neither WARNER nor NOLAN, individually or in combination, teach or suggest ring-shaped tanks that form constrictions in a central channel of a scrubber tower.

The ring-shaped tanks 10, 15, and 20 of the invention are situated inside the scrubber tower respectively situated at

locations along the length of the central channel corresponding to the plural scrubber stages. Seen in cross-section in Figure 1, the ring-shaped tanks 10, 15, and 20 extend inward from the inner periphery of the structure of the tower that forms the central channel 9.



In the detail of Figure 1 above, shading is added to the ring-shaped tank 10 in order to more clearly illustrate this structure. Where the channel 9 enters the ring of the ring-shaped tank 10 from the bottom, the channel narrows, forming a constriction wherein flow of the gas travelling from bottom to top will increase (e.g., as through a nozzle).

Neither of WARNER nor NOLAN, individually or in combination, teach or even suggest this feature.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the references WARNER and NOLAN fail to teach all the features recited in the independent claims as provided herein, and that the claims are therefore allowable over these references.

It is further respectfully submitted that the claims depending from the independent claims are allowable at least for depending from respective allowable parent claims.

For example, it is respectfully submitted that claims 23-26 are allowable in their own right in addition to being dependent from allowable parent claims, as neither WARNER nor NOLAN teach or suggest a separation trough 11 located on the inside of ring-shaped tank 10, particularly at the downstream end of the constriction.

Withdrawal of the rejection under Section 103 is respectfully requested.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that Applicants have fully responded to the August 9, 2011 Official Action and that the claims as presented are patentable. In view of this, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims, as presented, and their early passage to issue.

In order to expedite the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone the attorney for Applicants at the number provided below to discuss any matters that might be helpful to advancing the case toward allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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